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Stephen R. McCue

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March 5, 2007

TO: Members, House Appropriations Committee
FR: Mary McCue, lobbyist, Mt. Chapter NASW
Re: HB 808

The 500 members of the Montana Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers support the budget developed by the Health and Human Services Subcommittee.

They urge your support of funding for:

- 72 hour presumptive eligibility
- Secure Treatment and Examination Program (STEP)
- Behavioral Health Inpatient Facilities (BIFs)

Members of the Health and Human Services Subcommittee listened carefully to the public testimony offered on the department's budget and worked thoughtfully to identify programs and services that needed new or additional funding. In the area of mental health they recognized the need for community-based services, including much-needed crisis services.

The Subcommittee worked diligently to determine Montanans' health and human service priorities for the next two years, but with an eye toward the sustainability of programs. Their emphasis on prevention would result in reduced costs during future bienniums.

We entreat you: do not abandon the work that resulted from the collective wisdom and life experience of the capable members of this Subcommittee. Fund the health and human services budget as envisioned by your own Subcommittee